**STD/ISD/lnternet/Fax/e-mail facilities in UP**

2221. PROF. M.M AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of STD/ISD/lnternet/Fax/E-mail etc. facilities provided or proposed to be provided in various Gram Panchayats in Uttar Pradesh during the year 2002-03;

(b) the Gram Panchayats of the State where the above facilities are not available and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Out of 64093 Gram Panchayats in Uttar Pradesh State 14481 Gram Panchayats are having STD facility. The STD/ISD/FAX are optional facilities and are made available on demand. 722 out of 806 block Headquarters are having Internet/E-mail connectivity in U.P. State and are being proivded on demand.

(b) and (c) 49612 Gram Panchayats in UP State at present are without STD/ISD/FAX facilities. The STD/ISD/FAX facilities are optional facilities and are available on demand. These facilities can be provided as and when demanded in all the Gram Panchayats except 30 Gram Panchayats where the two exchanges are without reliable media. These exchanges will be provided with reliable media in the current financial year. Internet/E-maii facilities are being extended at Block Headquarters through Internet Dhabas set up through franchises. BSNL is offering Internet access for the Internet Dhabas in every Rural Block Headquarters.

**Pathetic condition of Rural Communication set up**

2222. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the pathetic condition of communication set up in rural areas; and

(b) if so, the measures taken by Government to extend communication wing in all the rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) The Communication facilities in rural areas are by and large satisfactory,. While every effort is made to further improve telephone services in rural areas but there are areas v^/here due to reasons such as inadequate road infrastructure, law and order problems, erratic power supply, it has not been possible to improve the services.

(b) Following measures have been taken to improve the telephone services:—

(i) Induction of modern technologies like Wireless in Local Loop, C-DOT/PMP and Satellite Communication in rural areas,

(ii) Alt rural telephone exchanges have been converted to electronic exchanges,

(iii) For better STD services, reliable transmission media is being provided progressively

(iv) Daily testing of Village Public Telephone (VPTs) from telephone exchanges,

(v) Fromation of core groups in each SSA (Secondary Switching Area) for prompt restoration of VPTs,

(vi) Replacement of telephone instruments having completed expiry period in phased manner,

(vii) Provision of generator set to take care of long duration power break down.

**Mobile and fixed phones**

2223. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the current penetration of mobile and fixed phone service in the country, the details of the players in the telecom sector and the market share of each entity with revenue implications, Statewise;

(b) whether any suggestions have been made to Government to exit from telecom field eventually and to enhance FDI limit from 49 to 74 percent; and